

# National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

3833 South Development Avenue; Boise, ID 83705

June 16, 2014

To: Geographic Area Coordination Group Chairs

From: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

NMAC Correspondence #2014-9

Subject: Airtanker Management

The addition of Next Generation airtankers in 2014 has introduced several different aircraft makes and models to the fleet prompting questions around utilization, rotation, and overall management. The following provides interagency direction regarding the management of all airtankers to include Type 1 and Type 2 airtankers (Large Airtankers or LATs) and Very Large Airtankers (VLATs) and supplements the current direction contained in PMS 508 Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide.

**All LATs and VLATs shall be dispatched in rotation (first in/first out), regardless of the location of the incident, except when:**

1. There is no Lead Plane or Aerial Supervision Module (ASM) available and the aircrew is not approved for independent IA response.
2. Incident commanders / aerial supervision determine the appropriate resource; VLAT, LAT, SEAT.
3. The on-scene aerial supervision determines that the use of a specific make/model airtanker is not conducive based on factors such as risk, maneuverability in terrain, and/or effectiveness.
4. The next airtanker in rotation has an operating restriction at the base where it is being assigned. Operating restrictions may include fuel and retardant availability and airtanker base or airport restrictions.
5. Realignment of an airtanker is prudent to locate them closer to where their maintenance crews or supplies are available. NICC will facilitate in coordination with the GACC.
6. A benefit to the using agency would be realized by changing the rotation. This will be facilitated at the GACC or NICC with consideration to days off, mission requirements, and/or anticipated need.
7. Airtankers are returning to contract availability after day(s) off, in which case these airtankers begin at the end of the rotation line at their assigned base. Airtankers that work a seven day schedule do not rotate out of their position.



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8. MAFFS and Canadian airtankers are brought on for the purpose of supplementing the commercial airtanker fleet. They will begin rotation at that base after the contracted airtanker(s) at the beginning of each day.

## Rotation of State Airtankers

Rotation of State resources on State incidents at a state airtanker base is established by their agency. In cases where State resources are operated in conjunction with federally contracted airtankers on an incident primarily on federal lands, airtankers shall be rotated per the national policy with the State airtankers being added to the rotation after the federal airtankers at the beginning of each day.

Airtanker rotation provides for fair and equitable use of federal contractors. Fair and equitable use is when like contractors can perform the same job; each contractor shall have an equal opportunity for use by the Government without discrimination based on type of equipment or personnel.

Forest Service contracted airtankers, when assigned to incidents managed by other agencies or state cooperators, remain under the direction of the Forest Service Contracting Officer, are bound only by their contract with the Forest Service, and will be treated fairly and equitably during their assignment with other federal or state agencies.

Daily availability for all LATs and VLATs on the Exclusive Use contract with the Forest Service is paid by the Forest Service Washington Office and is not charged to the using agency/fire. The using agency/fire is charged only for the cost of retardant and the flight rate. Additionally, as the costs of using the VLATs are similar to LATs, cost alone is not sufficient reason for not using the VLAT in rotation. Reference the flight rate chart for more information.

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/s/ Aitor Bidaburu  
Chair, NMAC



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## 2014 Airtanker Flight Rates

### Large Airtankers (LATs)

Airtanker Type	Airtanker Number	Gallons of Retardant	Flight Rate/Hour
P2V	T-48	2,082	\$ 4,600
P2V	T-44	2,082	\$ 8,495
P2V	T-45	2,082	\$ 8,496
P2V	T-05	2,082	\$ 8,495
P2V	T-43	2,082	\$ 8,495
P2V	T-06	2,082	\$ 8,495
P2V	T-07	2,082	\$ 8,495
BAe-146	T-10	3,000	\$ 10,495
BAe-146	T-01	3,000	\$ 10,495
BAe-146	T-40	3,000	\$ 10,495
BAe-146	T-41	3,000	\$ 10,495
BAe-146	T-46	3,050	\$ 8,900
MD-87	T-101	4,000	\$ 7,111
MD-87	T-105	4,000	\$ 7,111
C-130Q	T-131	3,500	\$ 7,000
RJ85	T-160	3,100	\$6,838
RJ85	T-161	3,100	\$6,838

### Very Large Airtankers (VLATs)

DC-10	T-910*	11,600	\$ 12,750
DC-10	T-910*	5,000	\$ 4,598
DC-10	T-911	11,600	\$ 12,750
DC-10	T-912	11,600	\$ 12,750

\*T-910 has two different flight rates based on number of gallons of retardant loaded into the aircraft. T-911 and T-912 may be loaded with less than 11,600 gallons but the flight rate is the same as for the full load.

**Note:** The VLAT is a different class of airtanker and has certain operational considerations (see briefing paper dated May 1<sup>st</sup> 2014).

This Rotation Policy does not apply to Water Scoopers, Type 3 Airtankers (such as the Cal Fire S-2s and SEATs) and Type 4 Airtankers (SEATs) because they are not governed by the U.S. Forest Service Airtanker contract.

